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Miami Laboratory  
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Miami, FL 33149

October 31, 2008

TO: Dr. Joan Browder,  
Protected Resources Branch

FROM: Larry Beerkircher,  
POP Observer Coordinator

SUBJECT: Longline gear Incidental Take summary for quarter 3, 2008.

The Miami Laboratory Pelagic Observer Program (POP) is providing you with a summary report of the incidental take of marine mammals, turtles, and birds that have been recorded by observers aboard longline vessels for July 1 to September 30, 2008. The POP completed an overall coverage rate of 7.2 % of the selected pelagic longline fleet for this quarter (Table 1). In addition, the POP monitored experimental “weak hook” gear testing in the Gulf of Mexico (Table 2). During the quarter, observers recorded zero (0) seabirds; however eighty-eight (88) sea turtles (19-leatherback-alive, 2-leatherback-dead; 67-loggerhead-alive), and ten (10) marine mammals (5-pilot whale-alive, 3-Risso’s dolphin-alive, 1-beaked whale-alive, 1-bottlenose dolphin-alive) were observed in regular fishery operations. During experimental fishing, observers documented no incidental take of any species.

Attachments:

Table (1) of the Incidental Take summary for the third quarter of 2008 by geographical area and effort (sets and hook count) observed in the regular fishery; Table (2) of the Incidental Take summary for the third quarter of 2008 by geographical area and effort (sets and hook count) observed in the experimental fishery.

cc: POP office files;  
Victor Restrepo, Jim Bohnsack (cover letters only).

Table 1: Percent coverage (by hauls), the incidental take of Protected Resource species (turtles, mammals, seabirds), and hook effort summarized by geographical area for July 1 to September 30, 2008 during regular fishing operations.

(A=Alive, D=Dead, U=Unknown. LB=Leatherback, LH=Loggerhead, O=other)

AREA	TOTAL HAULS OBSERVED	REQUIRED 8% COVERAGE	TURTLES			MAMMALS		BIRDS	
			A	D	U	A	D	A	D
			LB/LH/O						
GOM-2	35(2.8%)	101	0/	0/0	0	0	0	0	0
FEC-3	23(13.1%)	14	0/	0/0	0	0	0	0	0
SAB-4	0(0.0%)	13	0/	0/0	0	0	0	0	0
MAB-5	55(8.0%)	55	2/	0/0	0	0	5	0	0
NEC-6	78(22.3%)	28	17/	39/0	2	0	5	0	0
NED-7	19(8.4%)	18	0/	28/0	0	0	0	0	0
OFFSHORE	0(0.0%)	5	0/	0/0	0	0	0	0	0
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TOTAL	210(7.2%)	234	19/	67/0	2	0	10	0	0

Hook effort Summary:

<u>Area</u>	<u>Hook effort</u>
GOM	30,306
FEC	10,820
MAB	48,578
NEC	73,485
NED	15,780
TOTAL	178,969

Table 2: Percent coverage (by hauls), the incidental take of Protected Resource species (turtles, mammals, seabirds), and hook effort summarized by geographical area for July 1 to September 30, 2008 during experimental fishing operations.

(A=Alive, D=Dead, U=Unknown. LB=Leatherback, LH=Loggerhead, O=other)

AREA	TOTAL HAULS OBSERVED	TURTLES			MAMMALS		BIRDS	
		A	D	U	A	D	A	D
		LB/LH/O						
GOM-2	11	0/ 0/0	0	0	0	0	0	0
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TOTAL	11	0/ 0/0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Hook effort Summary:

<u>Area</u>	<u>Hook effort</u>
GOM	5,865
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TOTAL	5,865